

VDHR Reconnaissance Survey Form

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
PROPERTY SURVEY FORM
RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL

IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

VDHR File # ~~104-0213-000~~
104-0243

Property Name: Historic Dabney-Thompson House

NR Property Category: Building
Wuzit: House

Tax Code: Section Parcel
9 13

County/City: Charlottesville (City)

USGS Map: USGS Quad: Charlottesville East

ADDRESS/LOCATION INFORMATION

Address: 1602 Gordon Avenue Street

Location:

Vicinity of: Municipality: ZIP: 22903

PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION INFORMATION

Property Boundaries:
Ownership: Private

RESOURCE COUNT -

#	Category	Contributing?	TOTAL:	
1	Building	Contributing	1	
			Contrib:	1
			Non-Contrib:	0

WUZIT COUNT -

#	Wuzit	Contributing?	TOTAL:	
1	House	Contributing	1	
			Contrib:	1
			Non-Contrib:	0

RESOURCE - GENERAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Resource Level:
 Estimated Construction Date: 1894
 Source of Date: Tax Records
 Physical Status: Existing
 Condition: Good
 Threat: None Known
 Degree of Historic Integrity:
 Association:
 Design:
 Feeling:
 Location:
 Materials:
 Setting:
 Workmanship:

PRIMARY RESOURCE RECONNAISSANCE DESCRIPTION

Architectural Style/Derivative: Victorian (Vernacular Queen Anne)

of Stories: 2.0 # of Bays Wide: 4 # of Bays Deep: 2
 Arch Config: Geo Config:
 Footprint:

Component	#	Form/Treatment	Material	Matr'l Treatment
Chimneys			Brick	Corbelled
Foundation			Brick	5-course American
Porch		Wrap-around	Wood	Colonial Revival
Roof		Hipped	Slate	
Windows		sash	Wood	2/2 Double-hung

Brief Architectural Description of Primary Resource:

This handsome two-storey white weatherboarded Queen Anne house is irregularly square with projecting bays on all sides. The central block is two bays wide and double pile. Its high foundation is of brick laid in five-course American-with-Flemish bond with a wooden water table. The slate roof is a steeply-pitched hip with tall gables over all four projecting bays. It has projecting eaves and verges and decoratively-sawn exposed rafter ends, and is pierced by three chimneys with corbelled caps. All the gables are covered with pressed tin and have a pair of attic casement windows with decoratively-shaped glazing. The peaks of the gables are decorated by spindles in a fan motif above a spindle frieze with a scalloped border below. The projecting bays on the facade and east side have chamfered corners, giving them a semi-octagonal shape. Curved brackets with spool trim support the overhanging corners of the gables. Windows are double-sash, two-over-two light, with plain narrow trim. Those at the second level are somewhat shorter and have a row of six small lights across the top of the upper sash. There is a four-light circular

window in the entrance hall, below the second staircase landing. The two-storey addition filling in the SW corner and the small enclosed back porch have nearly-flat hip roofs with matching rafter ends, and six-over-six windows. The verandah wraps around the NW corner between projecting bays and is reached by a flight of nine steps. It has a hip roof covered with asphalt shingles, boxed cornice with modillions, plain frieze, square pillars, and a delicate turned balustrade. A short covered walkway connects a trailer to the west side of the verandah. The double entrance doors, below a single-light rectangular transom, have four square panels. A three-flight, open-well staircase with Eastlake balustrade rises from the entrance hall in the NW corner of the house. In place of newels, it has square posts reaching to the ceiling with a ball frieze between them. This is repeated between the entrance hall and back hall. Doors and windows have a symmetrically moulded trim with corner blocks, and there are transoms above most of the doors. Four rooms have fireplaces with Colonial Revival mantels. There is a semi-enclosed back stair, three flights with winders.

Brief Architectural Description of Additions and Alterations
Two back porches have been enclosed.

Brief Architectural Description of Secondary Resources:

Potentially Contributes to Historic District:

Rugby Road-University Corner

Potentially Associated with NR Multiple Property:

Architectural and Historical Summary:

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

In 1892 Richard Heath Dabney, history professor and later Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia, purchased three lots in Preston Heights (ACDB 98-141, 142). He built this house in 1894 and lived there until he bought "Edgewood", 703 Rugby Road, in 1907. He sold the Gordon Avenue house in 1919 to Frank Thompson (City DB 34-131) who sold it in the next year to Kate H. Sawyer (DB 34-435). It was purchased by the estate of W. C. Fitzpatrick in 1922 and occupied by E. M. Fitzpatrick until 1938. Then Anne Bryant Thompson bought it in 1940 (DB 105-129). It was used as a rooming house during the 30 years that she owned it. The Perry Foundation purchased the house in 1970 (DB 319-397) and donated it for use by the Blue Ridge Mental Health Clinic, a department of the Charlottesville- Albemarle Community Health and Retardation Services Board. Except for two enclosed back porches, the house has been altered very little over the years. A trailer was set up next to the house in 1975 to provide additional office space.

SIGNIFICANCE & RELATION TO EVALUATION CRITERIA

This large, nicely detailed, Victorian house with its spacious lawn and wrought iron fence, was probably once typical of the Preston Heights area. Now it is rare to find house and yard so well cared for and essentially unaltered. Especially noteworthy are the Queen Anne massing, the elaborate Eastlake gable trim, and the unusual staircase.

Built in 1894, the Dabney-Thompson House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a part of the Charlottesville Multiple Resource Area, both individually and as a part of the Rugby Road-University Corner Historic District. Richard Heath Dabney, the original owner of this house, was Professor of History and later Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia. Future President Woodrow Wilson, who had been a classmate of his, was a close friend. He was a houseguest at Dabney's later home, Edgewood, and probably also at this house.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Type of Record	Citation
City Records	Charlottesville City Deed Book
County Records	Albemarle County Deed Books
Interview	Thomasia Goss

PHOTOGRAPHIC/DRAWINGS DOCUMENTATION

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MISSING DATA ELEMENT

Media	VDHR Neg #	Frames	Date
B&W 35mm photos	13468	19 - 22	1/ /1994

CRM MANAGEMENT EVENTS

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MISSING DATA ELEMENT

CRM Event	Agency/Organization	Date
Survey	Community Development-Bibb/Huppert	/ /1978
IPS data entry-PAVA (Smead)		